

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1-46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,923,552 to Brown ("Brown").

Claims 13-35 and 44-46 recite similar limitations as those recited in claims 1-12 above, and are therefore rejected under the same rationale.

Claims 36-43 recite similar limitations as those recited in claims 1-12, except for the terminals displaying information being continuously on. However, it is old and well known in the art for terminals that receive notification and work information to be kept continuously on. Therefore, claims 36-43 are rejected under the same rationale as claims 1-12 above.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have amended claim 1. Claims 2-46 remain as originally filed.

Claims 1-46 are currently pending and submitted for reconsideration.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for the reason stated in section 4 of the Office Action. This rejection is respectfully traversed in view of the above amendment to claim 1. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to recite "a communications network exchanging managing information relating to the instructions and to the monitoring between the work control site and the plurality of work executing sites." It is respectfully submitted that support for the communications network exchanging information between the work control site and the plurality of work executing sites may be found, for example, at page 5, line 36, to page 6, line 1.

It is respectfully submitted that claim 1 now fully complies with 35 U.S.C. § 112, and that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being dependent on claim 1, and therefore being indefinite for the same reason. Therefore, for at least the same reasons as stated above with respect to claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2-11 fully comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112, and that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, should also be withdrawn.

Claims 1-46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brown. These rejections are respectfully traversed in view of the following comments.

Independent claim 1 recites a work managing system including, *inter alia*, “a communications network exchanging managing information relating to the instructions and to the monitoring between the work control site and the plurality of different work executing sites.” Support for this combination of features may be found in Applicants’ specification as originally found at, for example, at page 9, lines 23-29, wherein it is described that “work control site 2 displays in parallel the flows of execution assigned to all of the work executing sites 4 and provides this in common to the web pages of the work executing sites 4” and “[t]he work executing sites 4 can view the flows of execution for all work executing sites on their web pages and share the work information.” Thus, the present invention is directed to unrestricted, open communication among a work control site 2 and a plurality of different work executing sites 4 such that there is a non-competitive relationship between all of the sites, which permits an open exchange of information.

Moreover, as discussed in Applicants’ specification as originally filed at, for example, page 4, line 12, and page 12, lines 12-13, work information is enabled to be “compulsorily and continuously” instructed and monitored, and thereby completed. That is to say, the present invention may provide a system that enables both an instruction and monitoring of work information to be compulsorily and continuously realized. Such a system can be operated on web pages through the internet by referring, for the program on the web pages, to a database in the work control site at a constant interval through communication lines.

Accordingly, the present invention may provide a number of features and advantages. For example, the present invention is directed to “a plurality of different work executing sites.” Under the control of a “work control site,” i.e., under the control of both a work flow processor and a work flow messenger particularly functioning in the work flow processor, an operation is

performed that includes a “notification or report” paired with a “confirmation of responses to the above notification or report.” Additionally, the work control site and each of the work executing sites can share work information “compulsorily and continuously” as a result of the aforementioned paired operation. Thus, the entire management by the work managing system can be executed while maintaining both a coordination and confidence among the work executing sites and the work control site. Yet another advantageous feature is that the entire management is achieved on web pages through the internet.

In contrast, Brown describes establishing “restricted links” between a fabricator and a plurality of suppliers competing for contracts. As such, unrestricted, open communication, at least between suppliers, appears to be prevented. For example, Brown “enhances the flow of information among businesses without disrupting the autonomy of each business” (column 2, line 66, to column 3, line 5) and states that “[o]nce a contract is established, the Distribution Scheduling Subsystem 28 may serve as a means for establishing restrictive links between the schedules of the contracting parties” (column 7, line 67, to column 8, lines 8).

It is respectfully submitted that Brown fails to teach or suggest at least “a communications network exchanging managing information relating to the instructions and to the monitoring between the work control site and the plurality of different work executing sites,” as recited in Applicants’ claim 1.

For at least any of the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of independent claim 1 should be withdrawn, and that this claim is allowable over Brown.

Claims 2-12 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1 and thus recite the same allowable combinations of features as well as reciting additional features that further distinguish over Brown. Therefore, it is further respectfully submitted that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of claims 2-12 should also be withdrawn and that these claims are also allowable.

Claims 13-46 are also respectfully submitted to be allowable over Brown for generally the same rationale insofar as the Office Action asserts that these claims recite similar features. For example, independent claim 13 similarly recites a work flow processor providing functions including, *inter alia*, “instructing the progress of work to the plurality of work executing sites,”

“monitoring the progress while linking them with each other” and “exchanging managing information relating to the instructions and monitoring with the work executing site.” And independent claim 35 similarly recites a computer readable storage medium including, *inter alia*, “monitoring the progress of the flow of execution to the plurality of work executing sites while linking them with each other.”

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of claims 13-46 should also be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request reconsideration and timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.

EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0573. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

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